

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 629

By Bricken

A RESOLUTION to honor Judge L. Craig Johnson upon his outstanding service to Tennessee on the bench and in the military.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly take great pleasure in recognizing a gifted jurist and attorney who also proudly served this country in the military, both in country and overseas; and

WHEREAS, Judge L. Craig Johnson is currently serving his third consecutive term as the Judge for Part I of the Circuit Court for the 14th Judicial District, which serves Coffee County; and

WHEREAS, as the current Presiding Judge, he is responsible for the fair administration of justice within the 14th Judicial District in both felony criminal and civil jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, L. Craig Johnson also serves as the Presiding Judge of the Veterans' Treatment Court, which provides assistance to a diverse mix of underserved "Justice Involved" military veterans, including social, family, and job skills; and

WHEREAS, the youngest State-level trial judge in Tennessee when first elected, Judge Johnson has been a member of the Tennessee Judicial Conference's Executive Committee for multiple years and is currently the 2020-2021 President-Elect for the Tennessee Judicial Conference; and

WHEREAS, a veteran with thirty-seven years of combined military service in the U.S. Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard, Judge Johnson was the Commanding General of the Tennessee State Guard (an all-volunteer State defense force) from 2016 to 2020; and

WHEREAS, he served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for more than thirty years and attained the rank of Colonel in the Reserve components of the Army before retiring from federal service in 2015; and

WHEREAS, Judge Johnson succeeded at all levels of command, including Commander of the 194th Engineer Brigade and the 230th Engineer Battalion; and

WHEREAS, he was the Deputy Operations Officer and the Chief of Staff of the brigade during two deployments to Iraqi Freedom in 2005 and 2009-2010, respectively; as Brigade Commander, he served as the senior U.S. Army commander in Romania and Bulgaria during 2015 for the European Reassurance Initiative; and

WHEREAS, L. Craig Johnson was deployed to United States Army Europe as the 7th Army Training Command's Operations Officer at its forward location in Heidelberg, Germany, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2004; and

WHEREAS, he served in Desert Shield/Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia and Iraq in 1990-1991; and

WHEREAS, formerly the Course Administrator for the Reserve Component National Security Course at the National Defense University, Judge Johnson has taught foreign military officers from around the world and is a graduate of U.S. Army War College, from which he received a master's degree in Strategic Studies; the Command and General Staff College; the Senior Officer Legal Orientation Course; and the Brigade Commander's Course; and

WHEREAS, he was approved by the U.S. Senate for the Certificate of Eligibility for promotion to Brigadier General in 2015; and

WHEREAS, for his loyal and proficient service to the United States of America and the State of Tennessee, L. Craig Johnson received the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, three Bronze Stars, and the Meritorious Service Medal from the U.S. Army; the Distinguished Service Medal and Adjutant General's Distinguished Patriot Medal from the Army

Reserve and National Guard; and the Alvin C. York Award from the Tennessee State Guard;
and

WHEREAS, Judge Johnson earned his bachelor's degree in political science from Middle Tennessee State University and his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the University of Tennessee College of Law; he is also a graduate of the National Judicial Academy; and

WHEREAS, prior to his illustrious tenure on the bench, L. Craig Johnson was engaged in the practice of law in Manchester and served as president of the Coffee County Bar Association; and

WHEREAS, Judge Johnson has given back to his community as president of the Manchester/Coffee County Chamber of Commerce and was honored as the Chamber's 2018 Member/Citizen of the Year; and

WHEREAS, during his twenty-three years on the bench, Judge Johnson has evidenced integrity and a strong commitment to justice, and he is most worthy of our approbation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Judge L. Craig Johnson for his outstanding service to Tennessee as the Presiding Judge of the Circuit Court for the 14th Judicial District, salute his thirty-seven years of patriotic service in the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Army Reserve, Army National Guard, and finally as Commander of the Tennessee State Guard, and congratulate him on being selected 2020-2021 President-Elect of the Tennessee Judicial Conference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.